3.0 Other salient features

- National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) has been set up by DIT, Government of India to ensure that Internet traffic, originating and destined for India, should be routed within India. It is expected that NIXI will take appropriate steps for increasing the utilization of such facilities.
- The Government has assigned a very high priority to indigenous manufacture of broadband-related equipments and shall endeavour to work closely with the concerned Ministries and manufacturers associations so that the equipments are made available at an affordable price.
- DoT is conscious of the fact that Brodband services can reach the urban and rural consumers only if services are offered at affordable and easy terms. Department of Telecommunications will work out a package in consultation with Ministry of Finance and related Departments as well as concerned service providers to achieve this.

Losses suffred by BSNL through Cell One connections

97. SHRI LALITSURI: Will the Minister of COMMUNCATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has suffered heavy losses through the working of the 'Cell One' connections in Pune area;

(b) if so, the extent of the losses estimated during 2003 and so far during 2004; indicating the *modus operandi* used by the subscribers of the 'Cell One' connections;

(c) whether complicity of employees of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited in the scam has been probed; and

(d) if so, the findings of the probe and action, if any, taken against the employees found involved in the scam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) BSNL has billed Rs. 62.90 Crores to the

Cell One customers of Pune and Rs. 44.40 Crores have already been collected till 31.03.2004, as such the service did not incur heavy losses.

(b) However, some customers have defrauded Pune Telecom by obtaining Cell One connections under fake identity. These customers obtained Cell One connections by using fake ration cards, PAN cards and passport etc. as proof of residence. The mobile connections were used by them for making foreign calls. It is estimated that the amount involved in these cases is to the extent of Rs.4.18 Crores. FIR has been lodged against these persons with the Crime Branch and the police investigation is in progress. Six persons have already been arrested.

(c) Investigations is in progress and complicity of any BSNL employee has not been detected so far.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Cheating by postal employees

†98. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that agents in connivance with post office employees are cheating the people opting for various saving schemes in post offices at large scale;

(b) whether it is also a fact that no timely action is being taken despite officials are reported in this regard by the people; and

(c) if so, the action taken by Government to punish the erring persons and to return the amount to such victims and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. Some instances have come to notice in which agents, in connivance with postal employees, have cheated people opting for various Savings Schemes in Post Offices.

(b) No, Sir. Detailed investigation of each such case is done and appropriate action is taken against defaulting postal employees as well as agents.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.